News

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Catholic church leaders in Idaho say 15 priests and one deacon have been credibly accused of child sexual abuse since the 1950s.

The Diocese of Boise released the list on Monday, noting that some of the priests had died, others had been removed from the ministry or retired.

"Those credibly accused were removed from ministry if alive when the incidents were reported and retired if they were not already retired," the diocese wrote. "Law enforcement has been informed in appropriate cases where the alleged perpetrator was known to be alive."

More than 300 priests have served in the Diocese of Boise — which includes all of Idaho — since 1950. The list includes six priests and one deacon who were part of the diocese, as well as nine priests that belonged to other dioceses or religious orders.

Diocese spokesman Gene Fadness said specific details about exactly where the priests and clergy served and which cases were reported to law enforcement weren't immediately available, in part because some of the cases were decades old and because some of the people who initially learned of the allegations were dead.

The release comes three weeks after The Associated Press published an investigation revealing that nearly 1,700 priests and other clergy members that the Roman Catholic church in the U.S. considers to be credibly accused of child sexual abuse are living under the radar with little or no oversight. The investigation found that most U.S. dioceses had released the names of priests and other church employees credibly accused of sexual abuse, but at the time the Boise diocese was one of about 10 that had not said whether they would release lists.

The Boise diocese began presenting allegations of sexual abuse to a review board in 2002. In 2004, then-Bishop Michael Driscoll said there had been 12 priests credibly accused of child sexual abuse between 1950 and 2002. He did not release their names, however.

The list released Monday only includes nine priests who had credible allegations made against them between 1950 and 2002. The diocese did not immediately return a call from the AP asking about the discrepancy.

Driscoll retired in 2014 and died in 2017. Bishop Peter Christensen was installed as the bishop of the diocese in 2014.

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